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SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 1910.

Citizens and Commissioners.

On next Monday evening the board room wherein the District Commissioners sit in solemn state will resound with oratory. It is proposed to have the representatives of the citizens' associations appear before the Commissioners and set forth the needs of their various sections. It will be an opportunity for the display of Lancastrian eloquence and Hendersonian argument. We can already anticipate the fervent appeals which will be uttered in behalf of additional suburban sewers in the neighborhood of Brightwood, for better streets in Petworth, for increased police protection in Brookland, and for improved roadways in the southeast. From the classic precincts of Georgetown will come a plea for a park, and even Tennytown will not be silent.

We congratulate the Commissioners upon their desire to become acquainted with the city's needs. Under the unique government of the District, the citizen has no opportunity to make suggestion or point the way to much-needed local improvement, except through such impression as may be made upon the Commissioners. The latter, on their part, cannot visit every section of the District, and, indeed, only by great sacrifice of time and neglect of other duties can they get away from the multitudinous details of office work. It is worth while to devote an evening to acquainting themselves with conditions as they appear to the residents and taxpayers of various localities. It is true that even after the Commissioners learn the desires of the citizens' representatives, they cannot always accomplish results. The gantlet of Congressional legislation must be run, and this is not always easy. At the same time, the Commissioners are much better able to present the needs of the District when all the facts have been placed before them, and it is quite certain that they will be diligent in their efforts to secure affirmative action.

More Postal Reform.

On yesterday we submitted some more or less illuminating remarks anent the reform of the rural mail carrier as at present contemplated by "Uncle Sam's" wide-awake and progressive Post-office Department. We attempted to evidence an appreciation of the courage and foresight incident to this timely undertaking. Generally speaking, we are strong for reform; specifically referring to the rural mail carriers, we are rampant for it!

If we left the impression, however, that the rehabilitation of the rural end of our postal affairs is the only thing by way of reform at present engaging the attention of Mr. Hitchcock et al., we certainly did not intend to. Other weighty and far-reaching innovations are to be exploited. In witness whereof, consider: Stamp sellers hereafter must hand out their wares to customers sticky side up—meaning the sticky side of the stamps, of course. Not that it matters materially, perhaps, but that we must be careful as we proceed to the discussion of reform in the Post-office Department. It is well enough always to differentiate sticker from stickie, anyway. But, as the French say, "Let us return to our mutton"—which in this case has to do with germs, and not meat boycotts, as you may have imagined.

Germs, did we say? Oh, yes; germs! You see, "Uncle Sam," via Mr. Hitchcock, is mightily afraid we may form entangling alliances with the germs that occasionally most do congregate on the stamp sellers' hands. The germs are contented enough there, it appears, until an opportunity to attach themselves to the stamps presents itself. Not that the germs love the stamp sellers' hands less, to be sure, but that they love mucilage more. However—as we said before—the edict has gone forth that the germ-laden hands of the stamp sellers must not come in contact with the sticky side of the stamps. The Post-office Department proposes to stand firm between the customer and these particularly obnoxious and pestiferous micro-organisms, though the heaven themselves fall!

In the meantime, such relatively unimportant things as the postal savings bank and the parcels post will have to fight it out with Congress as best they may.

The Naval Personnel in Rebellion.

Nothing has been vouchsafed from the inner recesses of the Navy Department concerning the 200, more or less, naval officers who are described as in a mutinous attitude with respect to the annual physical test. Exactly how many officers are in the class of those who failed to make that annual demonstration of physical fitness has not been made officially known. It is admitted, however, that a considerable number of officers did not take the test in the last calendar year and have not been able to furnish an adequate excuse for their recalcitrance. A modified order at the beginning of the new year stated that officers who did not

take the test under the Executive requirement would be obliged to take it, which is like issuing an order that orders shall be obeyed. In some instances officers have been excused from taking the test, notably in the case of an officer whose retirement on account of the test would not have created a vacancy causing promotion, thereby exposing to view the suspected purpose of the requirement. It would seem that, in the interest of naval discipline, something should be done with a naval officer who fails to obey an order and does not give good and sufficient reason for that failure. It ought not to be a problem requiring profound wisdom on the part of experts in naval administration to deal with these refractory members of the personnel.

Actress and Poetess.

There may be quibblers who will object to the word "poetess," but in juxtaposition to the word actress, we see no reason for calling a pretty girl a "poet." Let this suffice as a justification for the use of the word in this connection.

The Grand United Brotherhood of Inspired Poets, with headquarters in the prosaic old town named Baltimore, have shown a gallantry characteristic of this profession, and have let down the bars, admitting a captivating member of the fair sex to their charmed circle. The object of this especial favor is Miss Elsie Janis, who appeared before them and individually and collectively charmed the long hairs there assembled. Among those gathered were Prof. Charles W. Moore, the sage of Pimlico; Prof. A. F. T. Stenzy, the bard of aviation; Prof. Theodore O. W. McKee, the muse of conservatism, and Prof. H. Stannard, the electric poet.

Upon being presented, the little actress quoted some of her own verses, as follows:

AN ADIEU UP TO DATE.
She raised her eyes of deepest blue
And looked right to his heart,
Then said, "I'm sorry you must go,
But best of friends must part."
He took her little hand in his
And kissed its finger tips,
Well knew that he could not aspire
To press those ruby lips.
He looked back when he reached the door,
And softly said "Farewell!"
And when the fatal door had closed,
The maiden said, "Oh—well!"

The applause that followed was tumultuous, simultaneous, and soulfully expressive. Monumental Chapter, No. 1, Grand United Brotherhood of Inspired Poets, by unanimous vote elected Miss Janis its first poetess. After the election, various members of the brotherhood recited some of their own productions, but we decline to inflict them on our readers. We have read them, and, while our knowledge of poetry is limited to the selections which appear on valentines, those read at the brotherhood meeting did not measure up to the standard, and we hope that the poetess will set a good example to her fellow-members.

So long as the Madrid forces control the telegraph and the typewriter situations down in Nicaragua, of course the opposition will find real progress difficult.

A New York heiress to \$300,000 declares she will marry no man short of her "ideal." In looking about, however, she will find the male contingent generally willing to waive for the moment practically any old thing in the way of a fault she may possess.

A New Hampshire woman in a suit for divorce declares her husband does "not know the war is over." So Senator Heyburn is not the one isolated exhibit, after all!

We desire to explain that our primary reason for mentioning Prof. "Matt" Hanson occasionally is because everybody else seems to have cut him out entirely.

The Pullman Company is to divide \$30,000. This is one Pullman game the porters will not get in on.

Do not imagine that every man who goes abroad is a plutocrat. He may be seeking an opportunity merely to enjoy a few American products and comforts at a price he can afford.

"The song of the first robin is heard in the land," says the Deseret News. Not for any considerable length of time, however; the changes in the weather keep him guessing.

We think, moreover, that it would be a good idea at this time to see to it that the shock-absorbers and springs around and about the Outlook sanctum are in first-class working order.

That Harvard professor who advises an imaginary coin to be known as the "dill" probably failed to remember that we already have imaginary coins known as "easy money."

"It costs twice as much to get drunk now as it did twenty years ago," says the Charleston News and Courier. Meaning the booze or the police court fine, as you please, presumably.

A French count about to wed an American girl protests that he is "not marrying her for her money." Nevertheless and notwithstanding, it appears that her father possesses an uncommonly large wad of the new stuff.

"The more those New York legislative bribery cases are stirred the louder they smell," observes a contemporary. Heaven help our olfactory nerves this time next week!

The man who finally does discover Dr. Cook is not going to be made a real admiral or voted a pension. Mark that prediction!

Witness Glavis lies now and then. Nobody has suggested that this may be an indictable offense, however.

"A Michigan professor says human souls grow after death," notes the Louisville Courier-Journal. Some men refuse to permit their growth this side of the grave.

"The Senator from Oklahoma is a—," remarks the Senator from Arkansas. "The Senator from Arkansas is another, and also—," More Democratic harmony!

Chicago reports the harvesting of the finest ice crop ever known. There will be plenty of time before the warm season, however, in which to frame up an elegant sufficiency of excuses for not lowering the summer price.

"A Connecticut man, despondent because of his inability to find work, committed suicide. He leaves, says a dispatch, a

wife and five children." What a text from which to preach a sermon on cowardice," says the Providence Journal. Oh, yes; and on several other things.

Newspapers inclined stoutly to deny that Dr. Cook ever reached the north pole seem perfectly willing to admit that he has visited practically every other place on earth of late, nevertheless.

"In Philadelphia, reform has sunk to absolute zero," notes the Springfield Republican. Where, no doubt, it feels perfectly at home.

Now that hens may be made to lay pink, blue, green, and lavender eggs, we confidently look forward to the rainbow omelet.

One sure way to reduce the postal deficit is to prohibit by law the sending of the Congressional Record to everybody who does not want it.

There is a growing suspicion abroad that future political aspirants will do well to mean precisely what they say.

Moreover, with Mr. Loeb in charge of the Roosevelt home-coming festivities, neither Mr. Roosevelt nor Kermit would dare try to smuggle anything through.

CHAT OF THE FORUM.

Glavis and the Committee.

From the Atlanta Constitution.
It is becoming a matter of doubt whether Glavis is investigating the committee or the committee Glavis.

What the Speaker Hears.

From the Louisville Courier-Journal.
By putting his ear to the ground and listening to the political talk of the day the Speaker of the House finds that he is listening to no Chorus ball.

Taft Retains Popularity.

From the St. Paul Pioneer Press.
Senator Jeff Davis, of Arkansas, has come out with an endorsement of President Taft. Aside from that, the President seems to be quite successful in retaining his popularity.

Recalls Hobson's Feet.

From the Charleston Evening Post.
The maid who kissed Hobson first, as far as the records show, after the Mermaid had returned from the East, has lost her heart to knooper. Poor Hobson's fate was worse. He was killed into Congress.

The Democratic Party To-day.

From the Philadelphia Record-Journal.
To-day the Democratic party as a whole, abandoned its historical position, and the entire Constitution and the Union falls upon Republicans of the elder school and those who grew up under their leadership.

Congressman Hardy Bearing Up.

From the Dallas News.
Probably Congressman Hardy does not feel unduly depressed over his inability to get his last year's anti-Bailey speech in the Congressional Record. There is plenty of raw material for an entirely new action on the same subject.

Says Roosevelt's Reformed.

From the Wheeling Intelligencer.
E. M. Newman, a former reformer, predicts that Roosevelt will come to be reformed. When he can show us the sun rising in the west and the Ohio River running from Cairo to Pittsburg we will be partly prepared to believe him.

Senators and Statutes.

From the Petersburg Index-Appal.
It seems not to have occurred to Mr. Heyburn that Gen. Lee's statue is in the Hall of Fame under the legal right and by the authority of the State of Virginia, just as Daniel and Martin are in the United States Senate. The statue derives its right from identical the same source that the Senators derive theirs, and it would be no more ridiculous to advocate their expulsion than it is to ask removal of the statue.

A Strenuous Occupation.

From the Yonkers Statesman.
"Have you no occupation my man?" asked the lady at the kitchen door.
"Yes'm," replied the tramp; "I'm a wrestler."
"A wrestler?"
"Yes'm; I wrestle with poverty, mum!"

Domestic Note.

From the Birmingham Age-Herald.
"I've noticed one thing."
"And what is that?"
"When an man gets loaded it's usually his wife who explodes."

A Hint for Every Head.

Our motto: If you see it in The Big Stick, it isn't necessarily so.

WASHINGTON'S INGENIOUS INVENTORS

Some Bright Ideas by Our Brightest Citizens.

D. S. Porter's Idea of a Perfect Telephone—Mr. Callahan's Novel Staircase—How Judge Wright Sails a Boat.

The Patent Office Gazette for the current week contains interesting descriptions and drawings of some inventions by well-known Washingtonians. The Big Stick hastens to give publicity to these ingenious ideas.

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A very novel staircase has been devised by D. J. Callahan. It is fitted with a grotesque, and whenever the grotesque waves disturb the equilibrium of the Southland, the grotesque revolves and the stator remains absolutely level. The invention will be in use in the near future, and the room has already been engaged by Ross B. Andrews.

Judge Wright has invented a belovine, a gasoline motor, which will be in demand by all persons who navigate in sailing craft. On calm days the motor works the bellows and the bellows blows the wind against the sail. This invention will enable Judge Wright to reach Haddisland Island in less than a week.

The automobile invented by Joseph M. Stoddard will soon get into order, a set of tires which never go flat, and an engine which never runs out of oil. Mr. Stoddard has been offered a fabulous sum for the rights to this invention, but he has decided to keep a good thing in himself.

J. Henry Smith's device for keeping flowers always fresh will attract wide attention. When the flowers are placed in a tub filled with an electric pump is started and the water is forced through the stems to the blossoms.

The illustrations of the invention show a sundew looking as pert as an American Beauty.

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Read the Bigville Bugle to-morrow.

SPREADING OF GEORGE.

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At least, that's what the story says. Although on truth it's shy!
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A. K. FARRIS.

A LITTLE NONSENSE.

GIVE HER EVERYTHING.

Clothes for women, coats for women,
Hats for women, too;
Clothes for women, beaux for women;
Any kind will do.

Hips for women, trips for women,
Timely winter jaunts.
The inhuman to rob woman
Of a thing she wants.

A Fresh Start.

"What are you going to give up for Lent?"
"The same things I gave up at New Year's."

A Solution.

"I can't please my family with my marketing. What one likes, another doesn't."
"I know how to do it. I have given the matter deep thought. The only way to satisfy a household is to hire a short-order cook and run the home as a family hotel."

As It Happened.

"Pa," said little George, "I've chopped down your favorite cherry tree."
"That's a good start toward the Presidency, son," responded wise Mr. Washington. "Now, split it into rails."

Nothing Elevating.

Money talks, seldom balks,
Does not brag;
But it goes as, alas,
Mostly brag.

Contrasting Odors.

"Look out of the window, Muriel, Ferdie is waiting on the doorstep with a bunch of violets. How romantic!"
"It might have been romantic," complained the young lady, "but the minute I open the door he'll know we're having cabbage for dinner."

Looks Like Discrimination.

"Why must the artists and actors hog it all?"
"I don't understand."
"Why can't a hod carrier have temperaments?"

Rift in the Lute.

"The magazines are buying lots of poetry nowadays."
"Yes," admitted the dialect poet, "but things ain't as they ought be. The magazines decline to run long poems as serials."

A Leg Every Three Years.

From the Boston Herald.
If you were offered \$75 or a new leg every three years, provided you had to wear an artificial leg, which would you choose? Prof. Franz H. Kirmayer, one of the teachers in the Bridgewater Normal School, prefers to have a new leg instead of cash. He is a veteran of the civil war, and the United States government gives him the choice of either having a new leg or \$75 in cash.

In addition to this, the government gives him the right to secure his leg anywhere he wants to, and the government pays all his expenses, including car fare, sleeper, and meals, and from the place he selects. If he wanted to go to Manila to secure a new leg, he would have the opportunity to do so.

Prof. Kirmayer has recently returned from Minneapolis, where he had a new leg fitted, and he is delighted with it. It is the best leg he has ever had, he declares, or better than any since he lost his real leg down in Georgia in Sherman's march to the sea.

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TODAY IN HISTORY

Life Insurance Established—February 19.

The system of life insurance was said to have been established in London in 1706, with the opening for business in that city on February 19 of the Amicable Society for a Perpetual Assurance. This is generally recognized as the first life insurance company. The rise of life insurance may be traced to several sources. The doctrine of probabilities developed by Pascal and Huyghens as to games of chance was applied to life contingencies by the great Dutch statesman, Jan De Witt, in 1671, but it was not until some years after that it was applied to life insurance.

In 1686 there was a hint of modern life insurance in a London organization, and this was followed by another association two years after. The operators of these two institutions seem to have passed away without giving to their successors any clear account of their plan of operations.

The plan of the first association named above was mutual—that is, each member, without reference to age, paid a fixed admission fee and a fixed annual payment per share on from one to three shares. At the end of the year a portion of the fund was divided among the heirs of deceased members in proportion to the share held by each. In after years the limitation as to age, occupation, and health was added.

The earliest policy of which anything

definite is known was issued in London in 1583, insuring the life of one William Gylbous for twelve months. This was underwritten by thirteen persons acting individually; the premium was \$30 per thousand.

Antedating the Amicable Company was the Mercers Company, established in London in 1600, but this was more or less of a private institution, and was conducted for the benefit of widows and orphans of subscribers, the members binding themselves to pay 5 shillings apiece to constitute an indemnity to be paid on the death of each member. Several London companies established in 1720 are still in existence.

The first life insurance society established in the United States was incorporated in Philadelphia in 1759. It was called the Presbyterian Annuity and Life Insurance Company. The first general life company, the Pennsylvania Company for Insurance Upon Lives and Granting Annuities, was chartered in Philadelphia in 1812.

The amount of insurance in force in the various large countries at present shows the wonderful extent to which this system has grown: United States (including assessment insurance), \$2,800,015,450; Great Britain, \$4,436,124,000; Germany, \$1,400,000,000; France, \$1,257,537,338; Austria, \$1,250,621,530; Scandinavia, \$1,040,402,901; Switzerland, \$1,414,412,554; and Russia, \$62,532,962.

February 19 is the birthday of Nicholas Copernicus, the eminent astronomer (1473); Admiral Lord Rodney (1718); Leonard Bacon, "The Nestor of Congregationalism" (1802); Adeline Patti, noted singer (1842), and Alessandro Volta, to whom we owe the Voltaic Arc (1745). Columbus was admitted to the Union on February 15, 1892, and the first lodge of Knights of Pythias was formed on the same date in 1864.

LATE ARRIVALS IN THEATERS.

From the Christian Science Monitor.

In an ordinance recently passed in Cleveland provision is made that a fine of \$100 be imposed upon any theater manager who permits a patron to take a seat while the curtain is up, the purpose evidently being to prevent late arrivals from interfering with the comfort of those already seated. Whether this ordinance will stand the test of practice remains to be seen. But there is no mistaking the meaning and intent, and no doubt the penalty will be the same as if the penalty were imposed.

There is no gainsaying the fact that those who disregard the rights of others, in public or in private, should, if unable to appreciate it for themselves, be taught the lesson that selfishness is unprofitable. It is true that the victory gained in requiring the removal of hats in the theater was the outcome of an effort more or less prolonged, but it was none the less decisive as a verdict of public opinion. One can hardly doubt that the outcome of this recent struggle for better manners in public places will be just as satisfactory.

He Got the Job, but—

From the Yonkers Statesman.
"What were you running for when I saw you to-day, Sam?"
"I heard of some job, sah."
"And did you get the job, Sam?"
"I sure did, boss."
"What kind of work did you procure, Sam?"
"Some washing for m' wife!"

Wanted.

From the New York Sun.
Knicker—There is room for a new invention.
Bocker—For instance, an alarm clock to strike the psychological moment.



Senator Cullom, who was quite feeble last season, has regained some of his strength and appears much like his old self. The two aged statesmen from Illinois, Cullom and Cannon, are wonders when it comes to getting there and staying there. Senator Cullom has been in the public eye as Representative, governor of the State, and Senator, since 1852, and is destined to be a national figure for some years longer.

Speaker Cannon has been a national figure since the Forty-third Congress, with the exception of one term, and has been Speaker of the House for four terms. He has a fight on his hands to come back, but it is a pretty sure thing that he will be with us again.

Though eighty-one years old, Senator Cullom is active in committee work, being chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, and a member of the Finance Committee, both of which require time and attention.

The diplomatic bill contains a number of odd but interesting items. One is to pay the expenses which may be incurred in the acknowledgment of masters and crews of foreign vessels in rescuing American seamen or citizens from shipwreck another is to pay the actual expense of renting a prison at Shanghai for American convicts in China, and to pay for their keeping and feeding. It also contains provisions for contributions to foreign hospitals at Cape Town and Panama.

The five Republican Senators appointed on the Food Investigation Committee, Senators Lodge, Gallinger, McCumber, Smoot, and Crawford, are regulars and voted with the leaders on the tariff bill. It is fair to presume that the result of the investigation will be some time. Senators Lodge and Smoot are rated as millionaires.

Geographically considered, the committee has two Senators from New England, two from Middle West, and one from the mountain States. The Democratic members of the committee, Senators Simmons, of North Carolina, and Clarke, of Arkansas, can be classed as from the South.

Senator Simmons, however, is from a Southern State that has shown protection privileges for some time. Senators Lodge and Smoot are rated as millionaires.

No matter how the Ballinger-Pinchot investigation terminates, no matter which one of the two men is proven to be in the right, one thing has developed in the investigation—a thing that has impressed itself upon the many attendants at the hearings—and that is the demeanor of Louis R. Glavis while on the witness stand.

The general public did not know that there was such a man as Glavis until the present controversy started, but now he is a world-wide character, and those who have seen him under direct and cross-examination proclaim him a wonder.

He was on the witness stand for thirty hours during his direct examination, and though questioned and cross-questioned by Senator Nelson, one of the best law lawyers in the country; drawn here and there by Senator Root and Representatives Olmsted and McCall, all lawyers of known ability, yet, through it all, he remained the same, cool, deliberate witness, never getting flustered, giving his answers and explanations with assurance and fervor.

He has now been on the stand for cross-examination for part of three days, questioned by the committee, unmercifully quizzed by Secretary Ballinger's attorney, Mr. Vertrees, but he is still the same Glavis. Vertrees is being coached by Mr. Schwartz, chief of Field Service, and Mr. Finney, both government employees. Yet Glavis never swerves.

Seated perched up in the witness chair, sometimes twirling a pencil, at others playing with a rubber band, he answers the questions fired at him in a quiet way, his voice never raised above its natural tone. He shows no excitement, nor anger, but rather has a pleased expression, smiling at times in the direction of his counsel, Mr. Brandels.

Surrounded by such distinguished statesmen and lawyers as the investigating committee and such an array of able talent, one would suppose that a witness would occasionally get embarrassed or excited. Not so Glavis. He respects his interrogators, is courteous, but self